

# WHALES ON WHEELS

Vol. X Dedicated to the Preservation of the ULTRA VAN NO. 3

## Rebirth of an Ultra Van

By Richard & JoAnn Badstibner #487

Our unit was produced in August of 1969. After purchasing 487 from the original owners in 1990 a dream began to fall into place. After serious neglect of the unit for the past ten years, it really needed a lot of TLC to restore it to the beauty it was when it was purchased. All furnishings in and out were the old original.

Jean McMasters owner of coach #330 was the first one to begin to restore it. He did the following: Rebuilding the break system; Foot activated emergency brake; New dual master brake cylinder; Extensive front end work due to corrosion; Steel steering bell crank added; Transmission rebuilt; Differential changed; Engine lowered three inches.



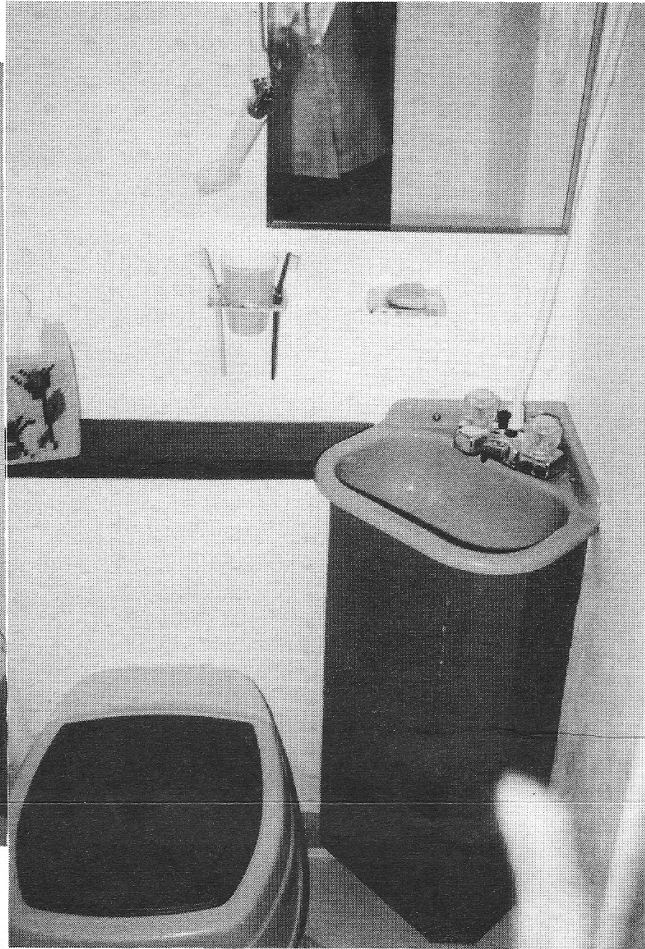
*New paint job of mauve on white. Note the new custom bumpers designed by Dick Granger #430.*



*The new kitchen area featuring new custom drapes in mauve. Note the nice placement of the new Sunbeam three way oven.*

The beautifying of the exterior of the coach was done by Dick Granger #430. Dick also replaced the bumpers with fiberglass bumpers which are his original design. The paint scheme is mauve (Lavender) on white.

The interior was redone with help of a dear friend, Harry Light. New mauve drapes and mauve carpet were installed. All furnishings were recovered in a gray fabric. The original oven was removed and in its place a sunbeam three way unit was installed. The bathroom has been wallpapered and a new commode was installed. The sink was redone with a two part epoxy paint in mauve. The towels and accessories



*The custom made hand towels in the bath area. At right is the new wallpapered bathroom with the new sink painted to match the rest of the mauve interior and exterior.*

in the bathroom were done in our design to fit the coach.

In June 1991 we took the finished coach to the Low Country Corvair meet and won a judge's trophy.

Other small items added were: self canceling turn singles; voltmeter; electric fuel pump and other Ryerson's updates. Now we feel proud that #487 has been brought back to better than original condition.

Much love and warmth have gone into this worth while project. We would like to extend warm thanks to everyone that had a part in it.

## TECH TIP

by W. Christy Barden

### TECH TIPS

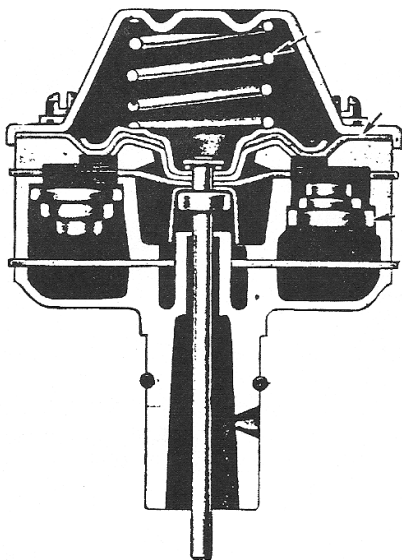
Fuel Pump. I have several Corvairs in different places. Sitting for months at a time then using them, the carburetors dry up. They require the engine to crank a long time to operate the fuel pump to pump gas into the dry carburetors. If the battery is low it could give out, and now start. Take out the bolt that secures the fuel pump and left it out, (leaving all gas lines attached). Set the stem on the edge of the molding and push it down and up. This is the same action that happens when you use the starter. When the plunger goes up and down



*Looking foward you see the teasfully decorated interior of the Badstübner's #487. Using gray and mauve colors.*

you can hear the gurgle of the carburetors filling up. Look in the carburetor pumps squirting gas into the engine. Place fuel pump back into slot and tighten and relock the bolt. This has saved me in low battery situations and may help you.

## Fuel Pump



Plunger



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jean McMasters #330

**One mans View of the June rally to Holland Michigan.** Bette and I left for Holland Michigan on Monday morning. We traveled through Goshen Indiana. While on US highway 31 outside Three Rivers Michigan, we heard a funny knocking noise from our Ultra #330. We stopped in front of a Real Estate office to determine the cause. The Oil pressure was

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OK. Thinking it might be a valve seat I looked for a more suitably parking area. I started the engine again and drove about 3 blocks into the parking lot to Farm Home Auto store. They gave me permission to park and work on the engine. These were really nice people!

July 2, 1991

I called back to Clyde Stanton, about 50 miles north of us. He relayed to the group that we were traveling with that we were broken down. The engine seemed to be using much oil. Thinking it might be the rings Clyde brought me his extra set. He arrived Monday evening with Pat Fitzgerald. By that time I had the head off, and the seats were OK. I pulled the cylinders off and checked the pistons. They were OK. The rod bearings looked tight. Pat said something that stayed with me. "Jean, if it made a noise that loud some where metal had to hit metal." It was late Monday night and they went back to the group.

Hi Guy,

Well, I guess double congratulations are in order. First the new coach, and what a coach. I know you are a proud and pleased fellow. Second, the computer format of *Whales*. Hay, I'm impressed. Next thing the dues will go up.

Tuesday morning. I had nightmares dreams about why the engine knocked. I took the rods out of the engine and spun the crank with the starter, no noise. Then I thought is might be a loose bolt on the flex plate. I turned the torque converter around with a screw driver. They all checked good and tight. So I happened to think maybe it's the flange on the half main which sets end play. It might have broken off. I used a screw driver to check end play. Eureka! I found it! The crank had broken!! My wife thought I was crazy to be so happy about it. But I had found the problem. It broke at the first throw between #5 and #6 journals.

I'll be out of Miami in about a week. Destination, all points West that are cool.

Old# 366 just keeps coming down in weight. Did you know that the bathroom door weighs 19 1/2 pounds! Good-bye door. I'll probably never get the power weight ratio you big guys get with those huge monstrous eight cylinders' engines. I keep slimming the old girl down. Not everything (or body) gains (weight) as they grow old.

Hard to believe but it's been five and a half years of the "good" life.

Now it's Tuesday afternoon. As almost always someone helpful comes along when a Corvair is broken down. A wonderful guy named Al Grunert lived about 2 miles from where we were. He came by to see if we needed some help. "I need a crankshaft," he replied "no problem, I have one at the house, I'll be right back with it." We fitted the crank to the rods OK using thin writing paper as a gage, for we had no plasticgage. They fit.

Walt Davison #366

*From the Editor: Walt retired as an Airline Pilot 5 1/2 years ago. Thank-you Walt, but the dues will not go up.*

Wednesday morning found me putting it together. It rained all day and night. I use the space on the floor of the great Ultra Coach for a shop. Bette was very understanding (what would I do without her). I finished up the engine Wednesday evening.

Dear Christy:

I wanted to write to tell you how much I like the new format for *Whales*. The last issue looks very professional and is certainly appropriate for such a high-quality vehicle as the Ultra Van. Lou Griggs supplied me with an extensive set of back-issues so I have a good basis for comparison.

Al came back Thursday morning and helped me put the engine on the ground. We pushed the Ultra over it and used our all thread rod to pull the engine in and hooked it up.

I liked the idea of an information sheet for distribution to interested individuals, but plan on using my own version (copy enclosed). Feel free to use my version if you like it.

Friday morning we drove to Al's house to clean up and get organized. Then we went on to Kokomo Indiana to meet Norm Helmlkey and go to the Indianapolis 500 rack track.

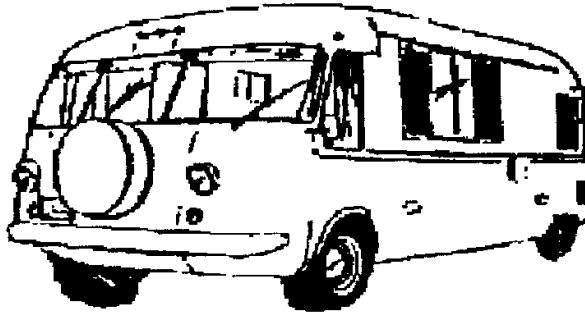
As a new owner, I have a lot of catching up to do. Fortunately, club members have been very generous in their responses to my many questions, although it's sometime hard to sort out fact from wishful speculation.

"Life is good to us." We are thankful for all the people that helped: Al Grunert, Richard Frederick (use of his ring compressor), Home Auto Farm Store Manager and employees, and Clyde Stanton. Thank-you one and all.

Has anybody attempted a survey of owners to determine exactly what modifications have been adopted, with what success? For example, how many coaches are running on original front suspensions as opposed to modified ones? How many owners use temperature gauges, and what

## The Ultra Van

The Ultra Van is a unique motorhome. Powered by a *Corvair* engine and transaxle, it was designed by David Peterson (a professional aircraft designer) in the early sixties. These units were produced in limited quantities by the Ultra Van Corporation of Hutchinson, Kansas until June of 1970.



As a true monocoque structure, the Ultra Van has no chassis. It is constructed like an airplane hull with aluminum ribs covered with riveted sheet aluminum on the top and sides. Compound curved areas (front and back corners) are fiberglass. All wheels are independently sprung with coil springs and tubular shock absorbers.

These units cruise easily at 55 mph and deliver 15 plus mpg. More than 250 of about 350 units produced are still on the road, many with between 100,000 and 300,000 miles of use.

### **Organizations**

Group Ultra Van, Dues: \$<sup>5.00</sup>~~4.00~~/year, quarterly publication - *Whales on Wheels*.  
c/o Louis C. Griggs, Treasurer, 626 Brookfield Ave., Cumberland, MD, 21502

Corvair Society of America, P.O. Box 607, Lemont, IL, 60439-5540

### **Specifications**

Length:	22 feet	Wheelbase:	152 inches
Height:	8 feet	Width:	8 feet
Price (New):	\$8,500-\$12,500	Dry Weight:	3-4,000 lbs
Today:	\$5,000-\$15,000	Touring Weight:	4,500 lbs+

# 14th Annual Great Western Fan Belt Toss & Swap Meet A Date in the Desert November 1-3, 1991

Desert ExpoCentre  
Indio, California

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print All Names Included in this Registration Clearly)

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address City State ZIP

**RESERVATION DEADLINE OCT. 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**AFTER OCT. 1<sup>st</sup> REGISTRATION = \$7.50**  
Our receipt, not postmark, of Reservation Form denotes date of reservation.  
Early reservation saves you money and ensures proper banquet seating.

<b>Registration</b>				<b>\$ 5.00</b>
Dinner -- Regular	\$ 18.00/person	X _____ =	_____	_____
Vegetarian	\$ 18.00/person	X _____ =	_____	_____
Swap Meet Space	\$ 10.00/weekend	X _____ =	_____	_____
RV/Camper Space	\$ 15.00/night	X _____ =	_____	_____
Ultra Van Space	\$ 15.00/night	X _____ =	_____	_____
Pet inside Fairgrounds	\$ 1.00/day	X _____ =	_____	_____
P.J. Party	\$ 5.00/person	X _____ =	_____	_____
Car Show	\$ 5.00/entry	X _____ =	_____	_____
Model Car Show	\$ 3.00/entry	X _____ =	_____	_____
Creative Arts	\$ 3.00/entry	X _____ =	_____	_____
T-Shirts -- Regular white w/logo	\$ 10.00/shirt			
Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large _____				
T-Shirts -- Football Jersey w/logo	\$ 12.00/shirt			
Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large _____				

Your Corvair  
Club Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED**



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We Need Swap Space next to RV/Camper \_\_\_\_\_ Ultra Van \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to C.W.L.A. Send with completed reservation form to:  
Corsa West of Los Angeles, P.O. Box 5023, Mission Hills, CA 91395.

Date Rec'd: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Init.



*With the help of "Ziggy" and remembrances of some huge chuck holes on I-70 in Indiana (which weren't funny) Mary J. Boso shares with us the cartoon of her experiences.*

kind of readings are they getting? How many coaches have added air-scoops, with what effect? It seems to me that there are enough coaches still in use to provide some reliable information, even with the problems of uncalibrated, and non-systematic measurement. Further, how many coaches are *really* still in use? What's the average mileage on existing coaches?

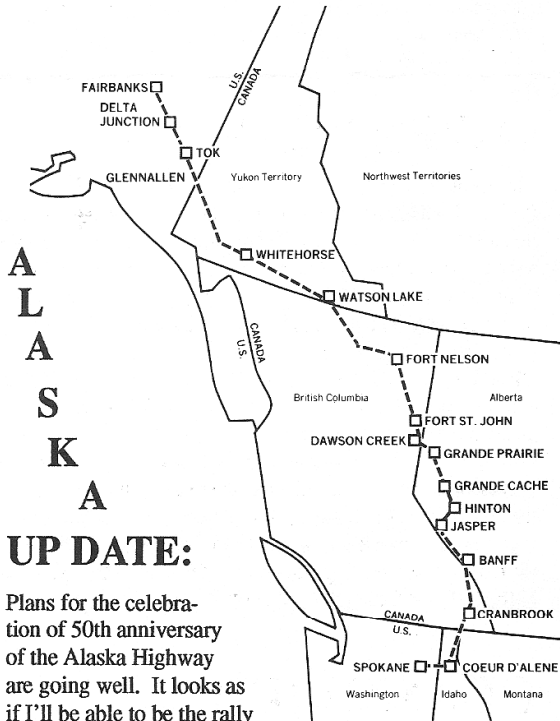
A detailed survey form could be developed, distributed, and data collected with a reasonable amount of effort by a small committee. The survey could be and add-in to *Whales* and the UVMCC newsletter, with some additional mailings lapsed members.

Again, congratulations on the new format. I look forward to the next issue.

Best wishes,

Ken Wildman #338 419 N. Johnson, Ada, Ohio 45810  
(419) 634-4874

*Welcome to the Group Ken. See insert for a copy of Kens information sheet for the Ultra Van. Does anyone wish to be on the committee that Ken suggests? Please let us know.*



## UP DATE:

Plans for the celebration of 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway are going well. It looks as if I'll be able to be the rally master. A few more months tell me for sure.

I wrote off for all the free information listed in the Winter newsletter. Since then I've been deluged with information,

maps, brochures, and flyers on what to do and where to do it. It seems that our concern about windshields is not well founded. The roads are paved almost all the way. People returning have complained about mosquitoes, dust, high fuel prices (\$2.25 a US gallon) and food prices, not windshields.

Yukon Commissioner Ken McKinnon recently stated "There is no doubt that this great Alaska Highway commemoration — involving British Columbia, the Yukon and Alaska - is becoming the biggest single event ever to take place in the Northern reaches of Canada and the United States."

The cost of returning by ferry will probably be prohibitive. So I think we will travel up and back via the Alaska Highway. The scheduling of ferries can also be a problem. Usually this is done six months in advance. Because we plan a fluid schedule this could be a problem. We will have 3 mail stops along the way. Valdez, Anchorage and Fairbanks Alaska. Our tentative itinerary is as follows: Dawson Creek, Ft. Nelson, Muncho Lake, Watson Lake, Teslin, Whitehorse, Minto, Dawson City, Tok Junction, Valdez, Palmer, Seward, Kenai, Anchorage, Healy, Fairbanks, Delta Junction, Beaver Creek, Whitehorse, Watson Lake, Muncho Lake, Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek. Now get out those maps. The Auto club has good ones. BE SURE to get a copy of Milepost (Crown Books), this gives you ALL the information. If you wish more information, send a Self addressed stamped legal envelope to: W. Christy Barden, 5537 Pioneer RD, Boulder, Colo. 80301. (303) 530-1288.

## GWFBT&SM

This year the Great Western Fan Belt Toss & Swap Meet (GWFBT&SM) will be held in Indio, California. Located just a few miles south east of Palm Springs. Ultra Vans will have a special parking area of their own. Located right next to the swap meet building and adjacent to the car show area. So if you have an Ultra Van you will be right in the center of all of the action. Other RV's will not be allowed to park in the Ultra Van area. They will park on the other side of the camping area. Ultra Van parking will include hookups with electricity and water. Dump facilities will be located on the grounds. Rest rooms and showers will be near by. This is the best arrangement the Ultra Vans have had in the 14 years of the GWFBT&SM. In the center section there is a copy of the registration form. If you want a full information packet write to: Corsa West of Log Angeles, P.O. Box 5023, Mission Hills, Calif. 90026. (818) 892-1491.

## CLASSIFIED

1967 Ultra Van #278, Rebuilt: Corvair engine and transmission, reinforced rear suspension, 4:l1 gear, brakes and cylinders, packed wheel bearings. New: Shocks and mounts,

gas gauge and tank unit, water pump, upholstered seats and new tires. Paint and bumpers good condition. New Curtains, ultra light weight. \$8,500. Howard Boso, 1536 W. Roundup, Apache Jct, Az. 85220 (602) 982-1596. After September 1st.

1967 Ultra Van #285, 140 H.P. Corvair. 28,000 original miles. New Paint and tires. Interior poor. \$4,000. Roy Muranaka, Northridge, Calif. (818) 366-9602.

1968 Ultra Van #357, 455 Olds Toronado. Very good condition. \$7,350. Roy Muranaka, Northridge, Calif. (818) 366-9602.

1969 Ultra Van #510, 305 Chevrolet V-8, fruitwood interior, air conditioning, some tinted windows, awning. Asking \$6,000. Mark H. Simmons, 97 Beverly Place, Xenia, Ohio 45385. (513) 376-1504.

1986 Vixon. Turbo-diesel, 10,000 miles. 26-31 M.P.G. \$50,000 Offer John N. McCracken, 7424 Ivy Ln, Murrayville, Ga. 30564. (404) 534-3494

## OFFICERS

WHALES ON WHEELS IS A QUARTERLY PBLICATION OF GROUP ULTRA VAN, A CORSA CHAPTER. IT IS DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND USE OF THE ULTRA VANS. This 22 foot unique motor home was designed by David Peterson and built in Kansas untill 1970. About 360 units were built. Dues are \$400 annually, please remit to the Secretary-Treasurer. Submit all technical information to the Editor.

### PRESIDENT

Jean McMasters #330  
916 Lighthouse Drive  
No. Palm Beach, Fl. 33408  
(407) 626-0388

### VICE-PRESIDENT

Jim Bents #446  
6571 Spring Path Ln.  
San Jose, Ca. 95120  
(408) 997-7438

### SEC.-TREASURER

Louis Griggs #334  
626 Brookfield Ave.  
Culmberland, Md. 21502  
(301) 722-2991

### EDITOR

W. Christy Barden  
5537 Pioneer Road.  
Boulder, Co. 80301  
(303) 530-1288

### DIRECTORS

#### Eastern

Pete Kehloer #465  
27446 Beacon Sq.  
Farmington Hills, Mi. 49018  
(313) 478-0906

#### Western

Art Eller #364  
3873 Shannon Rd.  
L. A., Cal. 90027  
(213) 664-3457

### Corvair Society of America (CORSA)

P.O. Box 550, Midlothian, Illinois 60445-0550  
(708) 339-6241

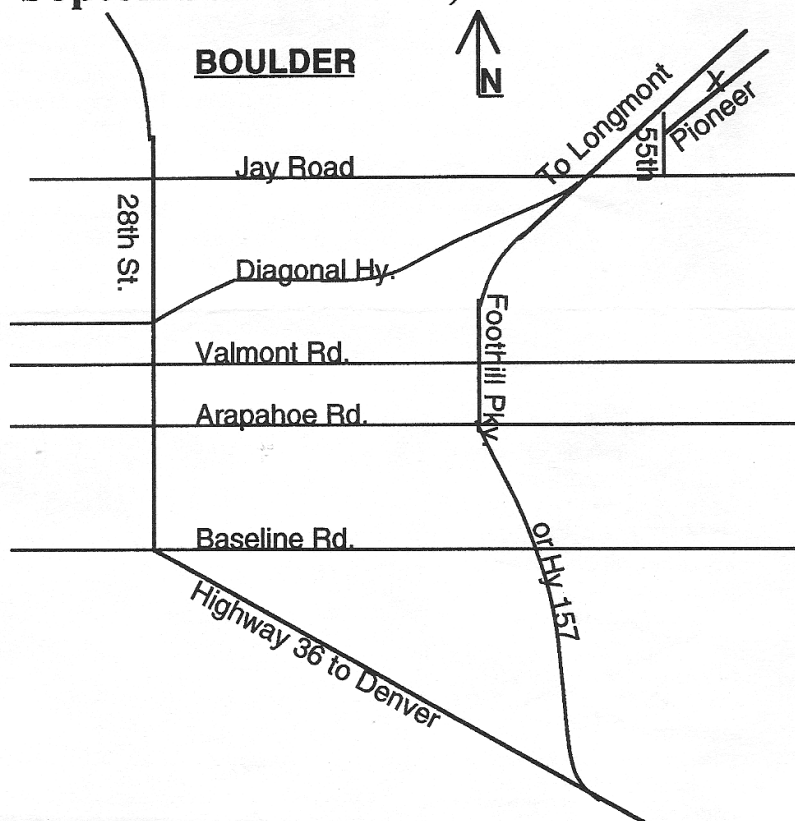


# Brake for BOULDER

Gathering place for rallying in a group to Neosho, Missouri  
September 15 -18, 1991

The event will be held at the home of CHRISTY BARDEN 5537 Pioneer Road, Boulder. (303) 530-1288 (see map).

The easiest way to find Christy's is go through town on Highway 36 also called 28th Street and turn east on the Diagonal Highway (Hy 119). When you turn south on 55th street you cross the R.R. tracks. Christys back yard is next to these R.R. tracks.



Visit the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Headquarters in Boulder. See the Denver Mint and the House of Molly Brown (The Unsinkable Molly Brown). Shop on the Famous Boulder Walking Mall with all sorts of free entertainment. If the weather is good, what fun to visit the Rocky Mountain National Park. Dinner out the our Famous "Blue Parrot" restaurant in an old mining town. Candy making session with Claire Hoffman. Grunting session with John Hoffman.

## UP-COMING RALLIES

**September 15 - 18, 1991. BRAKE FOR BOULDER.** Mini rally, Boulder, Colorado. Gathering place on way to National Ultra Rally in Missouri. Christy Bardens place, 5537 Pioneer Road, Boulder, Co. (303) 530-1288. Hosts, John and Claire Hoffman (303) 781-8617.

**September 23 -30th, 1991. National rally** at Neosho, Missouri 64850. That's located in the south west corner of the state, just below Joplin. Hosts Nobia and Warren Suckow # 331. (602) 841-0911. The site is the Municipal Golf Course on the south west side of town. That's on old Highway 60, just 1 to 2 miles west of U.S. highway 70 south. Sharon Johnson is in charge of the recreation center (the rally site). Her phone is (417) 541-6119. Day trips will include the pioneer village in Har-Ber in Grove. O.K., and the museum of George Washington Carvor in Carthage Mo. There will be a 25 year celebration honoring Ernest and Edna Newhouse.

**October 26 - November 7, 1991. High Desert Mini Rally,** Joshua Tree, Calif. Held at Jim and Marlene Craigs home, 45 miles north of the Palm Springs area. The rally will be held prior to and after the annual Corvaair Fan Belt Toss held at the Desert ExpoCenter in Indio, Calif. (see below). Hook-ups and dump facilities are available on site. Hosts, Jim and Marlene Craig #549 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, Calif. 92252. (619) 366-9104.

**November 1-3rd, 1991. GREAT WESTERN FAN BELT TOSS AND SWAP MEET (G.W.F.B.T. & S.M.)** The Desert ExpoCenter in Indio, California (25 miles east of Palm Springs) is this years new sight of the annual affair. The "Host Hotel" is one block from the ExpoCentre home of the National Date Festival and Riverside County Fair. Room rates range from \$33.00 to \$47.00, call early for reservations (619) 347 0911. Rick Trincherio is the manager. RV/Ultra parking will be at the ExpoCentre.

**November 8 - 9, 1991. FLORIDA CORVAIR AFFAIR.** Kissimmee, Florida. 2 1/2 miles from Disney World. Day's Inn is host hotel. Jean McMasters will be holding a meeting of GROUP ULTRA VAN there. Contact: Pat Coles, 1734 Rose Garden Lane, Orlando, Florida 32825. (407) 275-6153.

**March 25 - 30, 1992. Knight Trail Park, Laurel, Florida.** This is near the town of Venice.

**May and June 1992. Rally to Alaska. Rendezvous '92.** We'll meet in Coeur d'Alene Idaho. From there we'll tour up to Fairbanks Alaska. Passing through Alberta, British Columbia, The Yukon and up to Fairbanks. We may come back on the ferry along the coast. This is the 50th anniversary of the Alcan highway, 1941 - 1992. Big celebrations are planned by all participants along the way. Mark your calender. For further information contact: W. Christy Barden, 5537 Pioneer Rd., Boulder, Colo. 80301. (303) 530-1288. --Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope (legal size).



**GROUP ULTRA VAN**

5537 PIONEER ROAD  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80301



FIRST CLASS MAIL

BOB & BERTIE JOY 91  
4203 E. RIVER ROAD  
CORTLAND NY 13045